(a) whether the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has recently taken serious note of flight disruptions due to fog despite most airlines claiming to have CAT-III trained pilots;

(b) if so, the details of flights cancelled or delayed due to fog during the past two months at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA), Delhi;

(c) whether most of the private airlines are not keen to provide training to their pilots for CAT-II or III; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the DGCA against private airlines which are not providing training to their pilots for CAT-II or III?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) In order to ensure that airlines certified for CAT-III operations roster the crew with CAT-III qualifications during period, DGCA monitored the flight scheduling of the airlines during December, 2008 and January, 2009. During the past two months, 71 flights were cancelled, 752 flights were rescheduled and 145 flights were diverted due to fog.

(c) and (d) Pilots of various domestic Schedule Airlines are trained for CAT-II/III operations during low visibility conditions as per the requirements laid down in Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) Section-7, Series 'X", Part-I. Although there is no mandatory requirement for Domestic Airlines to get their pilots trained to operate during low visibility conditions, these airlines are persuaded to train their pilots to operate in low visibility conditions. Only such pilots, who are CAT-II/III qualified, are approved as Instructor/Examiner so as to ensure that more trained pilots are available for CAT-II/III operators during low visibility conditions to improve the operational efficiency. Further, flights schedules of Domestic Scheduled Operators to/from fog bound airports are approved on the basis of number of pilots trained by the operations for low visibility operations and the suitability of the planes for such operations.

Compensation to contractual employees

*33. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry is aware about an accidental death of a Spice Jet contractual employee within Ahmedahad airport runway campus;

(b) what compensation will be paid by the said company or by civil aviation authorities to the family of the deceased;

(c) whether his Ministry is aware that blanket outsourcing of various jobs by the civil aviation authority has given freedom to private contractors to violate various labour laws; and

(d) what action or preventive steps are suggested by his Ministry to protect the legitimate right of minimum wages, other facilities, medical treatment and compensation in case of untimely death of workers while on duty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir. M/s. Spicejet has informed that there has been no case of accidental death involving any Spicejet employee at Ahmedabad airport.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Provisions of various labour laws are applicable to the establishments who engage the contract labour and whenever any violation of labour laws is reported, necessary action is taken by the Industrial Relation machinery of the State Governments and the Central Government in their respective spheres.

Auction of oil and gas blocks

*34. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has decided to launch its biggest ever auction of oil and gas exploration blocks under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP)-VIII shortly;

(b) if so, whether the Global firms have been invited for bidding the oil and gas exploration blocks under NELP-VIII;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the awarding of such blocks to companies will have any effect on the imports of oil and gas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (e) The Government of India approved the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in 1997 and it became effective in 1999. Since then licenses for exploration of oil and gas are being awarded through global competitive bidding system. Seven rounds of bidding have so far been completed under NELP. The number of blocks and contractual terms proposed to be offered under the forthcoming eighth round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-VIII) has not been finalized. Global players will be invited when this round takes place.

The exploration activities in the new exploration blocks under NELP-VIII are likely to result in increased production of crude oil and natural gas, thereby enhancing the energy security of the country.

Dubious functioning of Satyam Computer Services

†*35. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of CORPORATE AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the recent exposure of the dubious role of Satyam Computer Services and the Price Water House Audit company has shaken the confidence of investors in companies;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there had been indication relating to the abovesaid company working in a dubious manner for many years;

(d) if so, whether Government has chalked out any additional measures to maintain a strict vigil on the working of companies; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi